UNITED NATIONS **ST**

Secretariat

ST/IC/1994/52
7 December 1994

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: 1994 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR PROMOTION TO THE PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY OF STAFF MEMBERS FROM OTHER CATEGORIES

1. In accordance with administrative instruction ST/AI/396 and Add.1, the following information is provided on the format and procedures for the 1994 competitive examination for promotion to the Professional category of staff members from other categories. As noted in that instruction, the following occupational groups have been selected:

(a) Administration, which covers work such as that of administrative officers, personnel officers, budget officers and project management officers;

(b) Economics, which covers work such as that of economists, specialists in transnational corporations and specialists in industrial development;

(c) Library, which covers work such as that of librarians and records management officers;

(d) Photography, which covers work such as that of photographers;

(e) Political affairs, which covers work such as that of political affairs officers and liaison officers;

(f) Public information, which covers work such as that of information officers and press officers;

(g) Social affairs, which covers work such as that of social welfare and humanitarian affairs officers.

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A. Written examination

2. For all occupational groups other than photography, the written examination accounts for 90 per cent of the total number of points available for each occupational group and consists of two parts: a general paper (four hours) and a specialized paper (four hours) related to the occupational group concerned. For photography the written examination and the two practical assignments account for 90 per cent of the total number of points available. The written examination consists of two parts: a general paper (four hours) and a specialized paper (two hours). An examination booklet will be distributed to the candidates at the beginning of each part of the written examinations. The examination must be written with dark blue or black pen only in the designated parts of each booklet.

3. The general paper comprises three sections, with a total coefficient of 35 per cent:

(a) Section 1 will test candidates' ability to analyse a problem. This section consists of a text and questions based on the text. The time recommended for this section is 1 hour and 20 minutes and it has a coefficient of 10 per cent of the marks assigned to the examination;

(b) Section 2 consists of a text of a speech or a report. Candidates will be asked to summarize the text, reducing it to approximately one third of its length. The summary will be evaluated for comprehension, accuracy and clarity of thought. The time recommended for this section is 1 hour and 20 minutes and it has a coefficient of 10 per cent of the marks assigned to the examination;

(c) Section 3 deals with questions on international relations. Candidates may choose any 10 among 12 questions offered. The time recommended for this section is 1 hour and 20 minutes and it has a coefficient of 15 per cent of the marks assigned to the examination.

4. For all occupational groups other than photography, the specialized paper, which tests substantive knowledge of the occupational group concerned, normally consists of 3 essay-type exercises and 10 short-answer type questions. All essays and questions are mandatory. The total time recommended for this part is four hours and it has a coefficient of 55 per cent of the marks assigned to the examination. The specialized paper of the photography examination has a coefficient of 15 per cent and consists of three to five questions on issues related to photography. Candidates who pass the written examination will also take part in two practical photography assignments (dates to be announced) which will have a combined coefficient of 40 per cent.

5. As stated in paragraph 24 of administrative instruction ST/AI/396, candidates participating in the examination shall be permitted to take the examination in any of the working languages of the regional commissions, with due regard to the requirement of proficiency in one of the working languages of the Secretariat. In order to demonstrate such proficiency, all candidates will have to take section 2 (drafting test) in either English or French. Alternatively, candidates may elect to take the entire written examination (parts 1 and 2) in a working language of a commission other than English or French and sit for a special language test in either English or French. This

test consists of two parts covering, respectively, reading and writing abilities. The duration of the test is 2 hours and 30 minutes. Candidates who have not demonstrated proficiency in one of the working languages of the Secretariat (English or French) in the special language test or in the drafting test will be considered as not having met the standard required in the examination.

6. The exact time of the examinations will be adjusted for each examination centre, taking into account the various time zones, and will be communicated to each candidate. Candidates should arrive at the examination room in each centre at least half an hour in advance of the scheduled starting time and have with them a United Nations identification document, their convocation letter and pens.

7. The written examinations will be held at the designated examination centres for the occupational groups mentioned in paragraph 1 on the following dates:

Administration	31 January 1995
General paper	1 February 1995
Economics	30 January 1995
Public information	30 January 1995
Library	3 February 1995
Political affairs	27 January 1995
Photography	2 February 1995
Special language test	30 January 1995
Social affairs	2 February 1995

B. Oral examination

8. Candidates may be convoked for an oral examination in accordance with paragraph 14 (b) of administrative instruction ST/AI/396. Candidates serving at duty stations away from Headquarters will take this part of the examination either in New York or at another location, depending on circumstances. At locations away from Headquarters, the oral examination will be conducted by a board consisting of at least three members of the relevant board of examiners, including an ex officio member.

9. The oral examination is scheduled to be held in April-May 1995.

10. Candidates will take the oral examination either in English or French, the working languages of the Secretariat, in accordance with the preference stated in their original application. The oral examination accounts for 10 per cent of the total number of points available.

11. For all occupational groups except photography, the standardized format of the oral examination will include a 5- to 10-minute presentation of a general nature on a topic broadly related to the occupational group concerned. Each candidate will draw two topics at random from a selection prepared in advance and choose one of the topics. The candidate will then have 15 minutes to prepare an oral presentation on the selected topic. Following the presentation, the Board of Examiners will have an opportunity to ask three questions for

clarification or amplification of any of the points made by the candidate. After the presentation and related questions, the Board will ask seven other questions of a general nature, also broadly related to the occupation.

12. The presentation and responses to the questions of the oral examination will be evaluated in accordance with a rating scale designed to assess the candidate's ability to comprehend topics and questions, to communicate with others and to present and illustrate with examples his or her views in a clear, logical and understandable way. In order to ensure consistency, the marking will be done separately by each member of the Board immediately after each oral examination and without relation to the grading of the written examination. For all occupational groups other than photography, the presentation will account for 45 per cent of the points assigned to the oral examination, the answers to the requests for clarification or amplification for 15 per cent and the answers to the seven other questions for 40 per cent.

13. For photography the candidates will be expected to present their portfolios and the Board of Examiners will question them on the broad subject of photography. The presentation of portfolios will account for 45 per cent of the points assigned to the oral examination. The answers to the questions based on the portfolio presentation and other supplementary questions will account for 55 per cent.

UNITED
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Secretariat

ST/IC/1994/53
30 November 1994

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff at Headquarters

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS

1. The next language proficiency examinations in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish will be held in January 1995. The session is scheduled for 24 and 25 January 1995. These examinations are open to:

(a) Students who have completed the highest level of a United Nations language course;

(b) Staff members who have not enrolled in a United Nations language course but who can show evidence that they possess, in the language to be tested, a level of knowledge equivalent to that of students who have completed the relevant United Nations language course.

Non-staff members who have not completed the highest level of a United Nations language course are not eligible to sit for the language proficiency examinations.

2. A staff member may take a language proficiency examination to obtain a certificate establishing proficiency in a second official language and, in certain cases:

(a) To benefit from the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 2480 B (XXIII) of 21 December 1968;

(b) To qualify for the first or second language allowance under staff rule 103.6.

3. Resolution 2480 B (XXIII) applies to staff members in the Professional category and above subject to geographical distribution who work in one of the working languages of the Secretariat and who have an adequate and confirmed knowledge of a second official language. The criteria for benefiting from the language incentives provided for under the resolution are set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/207 of 23 December 1971.

4. Under staff rule 103.6, staff members in the General Service and Trades and Crafts categories or in the Field Service category below level 6 are eligible for language allowances. Staff members must be proficient in two official languages and must pass the language proficiency examination in one of them to receive the allowance. To receive a second language allowance they must be proficient in three official languages and must pass the proficiency examination in two of them. Staff members whose mother tongue is an official language of the Organization must pass the examination in another official language, which may be the language in which they are required to be proficient by the terms of their appointment. The language proficiency examination in their mother tongue is waived. Staff members whose mother tongue is not one of the official languages must pass the examination in an official language other than that in which they are required to be proficient by the terms of their appointment. The proficiency examination in that language is waived.

5. Those wishing to take the examination in January 1995 must submit a P.46 application form to the Language Training Programme of the Training Service (room S-606, ext. 3-7056). A separate application must be submitted for each language examination requested. Staff members may register in room S-606 between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. from Thursday, 5 January to Friday, 20 January 1995, the deadline for registration.

6. Successful candidates must pass BOTH the written and oral parts of the examination with a minimum score of 65 per cent in each part.

7. In certain cases in which candidates receive a score of 80 per cent or more on the written examination but fail the oral, the jury adjudicating the examination will review the cases and may allow candidates to retain their written score for the following examination session, for which they must fill in a new application form. In such cases, candidates will receive written notification of the jury's decision and will have to retake only the oral examination at the following session. The same consideration cannot be given, however, for the oral test or to candidates who have not taken both parts of the examination at the same session.

8. The schedule for the written examination for the January 1995 session is as follows: 1/

24 January 1995

English ..... 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Chinese ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Russian ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

25 January 1995

French ..... 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Arabic ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Spanish ..... 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Candidates are advised to arrive 15 minutes before the start of the examination time in order to allow for check-in procedures.

9. The oral examination will consist of individual 15-minute interviews. Candidates will be given interview appointments at the time of their registration.

10. The number of the conference room in which each examination will be held will be posted in the Secretariat Building on the fourth, fifth and sixth floor bulletin boards and on those in the DC1, DC2 and DC3 buildings. Candidates should check the bulletin boards, as the Training Service cannot send out individual notices for the written examinations.

11. Copies of sample examinations can be obtained in room S-606.

12. Candidates will receive written notification of their examination results by the end of March 1995. No results will be available prior to the official notice.

13. Information on future language proficiency examinations will be issued in early 1995.

Notes

1/ In view of the demand for conference rooms, the times indicated may have to be changed. Candidates should consult bulletin boards the week before the examinations.

UNITED
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Secretariat

ST/IC/1994/54
1 December 1994

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: 1995 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR FRENCH TRANSLATORS/PRÉCIS-WRITERS

1. A competitive examination for the recruitment of French translators/précis-writers will be held on 3 and 4 April 1995 in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of this examination is to establish a roster from which present and future vacancies for French translators/précis-writers at United Nations Headquarters in New York, and at other duty stations in Africa, Asia and Europe will be filled. Staff members who are successful in this examination and are selected for inclusion in the roster will be assigned to fill vacancies as they occur, on the recommendation of the Office of Conference and Support Services. Assignments are subject to rotation and translators/précis-writers may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations according to the needs of the Organization. Translators/précis-writers are expected to serve a MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS in a language post.

2. The examination is open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements. Staff members from subsidiary organs of the United Nations, as well as staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or to special missions, are considered outside candidates for the purpose of this examination. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 10 and 11 below.

3. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have French as their main language; 1/

(b) Have a perfect command of French and an excellent knowledge of English. They must also have an excellent knowledge of Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish. Knowledge of additional, non-official languages and previous translation experience would be considered an asset. The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages by attaching to their application a photocopy (not the original) of either a degree or certificate in the languages or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed;

(c) Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from an institution of higher education at which French is the language of instruction.

4. The requirement for a degree or its equivalent mentioned in paragraph 3 (c) may be waived for staff members who had at least five years of continuous service with the Secretariat by 31 December 1989 and who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from an institution at which the language of instruction is French.

5. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. THE BOARD'S DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

6. The written examination will consist of five papers:

(a) Translation into French of a general text in English (three hours);

(b) Translation into French of a text to be chosen by the candidate from a total of eight texts, two in Arabic, two in Chinese, two in Russian and two in Spanish (two hours);

(c) Summary in French of a speech in English (two hours);

(d) Translation into French of two English texts to be chosen by the candidate from a total of five specialized texts (economic, legal, scientific, social and technical) (three hours);

(e) (Optional) Translation into French of one general text to be chosen by the candidate from a total of four texts, in Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish (two hours). Candidates who write this optional paper must choose a language other than the language(s) which they chose in papers (b) of the examination.

7. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material is NOT permitted during the examination.

8. On the basis of the results obtained in the written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview, which will normally take place 10 to 12 weeks after the written component of the examination. The interview will consist in part of an oral translation, which the candidate will be asked to do after 30 minutes' preparation. In addition, the Board will interview each candidate to assess general knowledge, professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations, willingness to serve at any duty station and ability to work as a member of a team. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited to an interview SHOULD NOT assume that they will be assigned as a translator/ précis-writer.

9. On the basis of the overall results of the examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates for inclusion in the roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are NOT subject to appeal. The Board DOES NOT release individual results.

10. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as French translators/précis-writers for a trial period of two years. Staff members at the P-1 level or below will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels.

11. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Office of Conference and Support Services and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their translation functions at the P-3 level. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

12. French translators/précis-writers are called upon to translate into French from English and also from the other official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish) and occasionally from other languages. They are also required to attend meetings of United Nations bodies and draft French summary records of the proceedings.

13. Upon completion of a training period, if necessary, translators/précis-writers will be required to work on word-processing or similar data-entry equipment.

14. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, NOT LATER THAN 31 January 1995, to:

Competitive Examination for French Translators/Précis-writers
Recruitment and Placement Division
Room S-2535G
United Nations Secretariat
New York, NY 10017

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15. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their application to the Recruitment and Placement Division through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations before 31 January 1995, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Recruitment and Placement Division.

16. Staff members may obtain copies of model examination papers from the Examinations and Tests Section, room S-2575, United Nations Secretariat, New York, NY 10017. Staff members serving at the United Nations Office at Geneva may obtain such copies from the Training and Examinations Section, Villa Le Bocage, Office 4.

Notes

1/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to translate. Candidates' claims to French as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

APPLICATION

1995 COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION FOR FRENCH TRANSLATORS/PRÉCIS-WRITERS 1/

INDEX NO. 2/ /_/_/_/_/_/_/

LAST NAME /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/ Category /_/_/ Level /_/_/

FIRST NAME /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/ Sex: Male /_/ Female /_/

Date of entry on duty: Month /_/_/ Year 19 /_/_/

Type of contract: _____ Expiration date: _____

Department/Office 3/ _____ Duty station: _____

Room No. _____ Extension _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes /_/ in 19 /_/_/ No /_/

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes /_/ in 19 /_/_/ No /_/

If yes, which examination(s) _____

What is your main language? 4/ /_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/_/

A. Knowledge of other languages 5/

1. Courses taken at:

Language(s)	United Nations language programme (indicate highest level and date)	Other institution (name and location)

2. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

Language	Read		Understand		Speak		Write	
	Easily	Not easily	Easily	Not easily	Fluently	Not fluently	Easily	Not easily

/...

B. Degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications 6/

Name of institution (place and country)	Language of instruction	Attended from/to		Degree 6/ or equivalent	Main field of study
		Month/year	Month/year		

C. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution (place and country)	Language of instruction	Attended from/to		Certificate or equivalent 6/	Main field of study
		Month/year	Month/year		

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/1994/54 and I understand that, if I am successful in the competitive examination for French translators/précis-writers and recommended for inclusion in the roster, my assignment as a French translator/précis-writer will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 10 and 11 of that circular.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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Notes

1/ Staff members applying for this examination MUST COMPLETE THIS SECTION. In addition, staff members MUST ATTACH written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which French is the language of instruction. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless they were convoked for the G to P examination for promotion to the Professional category or another language examination. Applications which are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member FOR COMPLETION AND RESUBMISSION WITHIN THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS in the Recruitment and Placement Division. Extensions for receipt of applications will NOT be granted.

2/ Appears normally on your monthly salary statement and Personnel Action forms. If not, please contact your Executive Officer to obtain your number.

3/ Please indicate Department/Office, e.g., Office of Conference and Support Services, ECE, UNCTAD, United Nations Office at Geneva, United Nations Office at Vienna or other (specify).

4/ "Main language" should be understood to be the language into which the candidate is best able to translate. Candidates' claims to French as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

5/ Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 (b) of information circular ST/IC/1994/54.

6/ Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate.